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# *Admitted student turns to GoFundMe amid negotiations over financial aid*

**By ABIGAIL CHANG**
*Senior News Editor*

When Lee* was admitted Early Decision to Middlebury's class of 2025 this December, he assumed his acceptance letter would soon be followed by a financial aid package covering the full $75,000 price tag. He had informed the college that his father would not pay for his education and that he had not saved enough money to afford tuition on his own. His CSS profile even contained a signed statement from his father and another relative confirming his situation.

"Middlebury meets the full demonstrated financial need of all admitted students," according to the affordability section of the admission page, and Lee was confident he met the criteria. Then, he received his financial aid award.

Initially, the college set Lee's expected family contribution — the portion of tuition cost that a student's family is required to pay — at nearly $30,000. Lee lives with his father, whose income places their household within the bounds of the upper middle class.

But Lee's father refused to pay the family contribution — kick-starting a months-long process of negotiation, advocacy and crowd-sourcing that many Middlebury community members first became aware of through the circulation of a GoFundMe campaign created by Lu Mila '24.

The campaign, entitled "Help a Trans Man Attend Middlebury College," raised over $4,000 in the first four days after Mila set it up, but donations have since plateaued. After four weeks of fundraising, it still sits under $5,000.

The campaign description provides a snapshot of Lee's predicament, explaining that he is a trans man living in a red state and that he will soon be homeless if his father follows through on threats to kick him out after he turns 18. The page also describes the response Lee received from the college when he initially raised concerns about his financial aid package.

"They replied with 'We cannot base our financial aid decisions based on a family's willingness to pay. We base our decisions on a family's ability to pay,'" the GoFundMe page reads.

Though donations have slowed, Lee and his advocates have made some progress with revising his financial aid package. Mila, who has known Lee since high school, posted an update to the page on Feb. 22 notifying followers that Lee's financial aid award had been increased, roughly halving his expected family contribution.

To get the award increased, Lee had to provide additional documentation of his household's expenses.

"I had to look for documents of uninsured expenses and find a way to ask my father about it," he said in an email to The Campus. "I'm lucky that he was in a good mood and answered everything while providing the proof."

Lee said he began telling the school about his situation at the start of Discover Middlebury, the college's special visit program for underrepresented students.

"At the end of Discover Middlebury, I was reassured that whatever I struggled with, I would be helped for," he said.

Confident in the college's claims about meeting 100% of demonstrated need, Mila encouraged their friend to apply to Middlebury early decision, reassuring him that his financial circumstances would be understood.

The college uses the FAFSA to determine federal financial aid and looks at the CSS profile, personal tax returns and W-2s to

**Editor's note: Lee is a pseudonym used to protect the identity of an admitted student.*

*Continued online at middleburycampus.com*

SPORTS

# NESCAC announces return of conference play after year-long hiatus

**By BLAISE SIEFER**
*Senior Sports Editor*

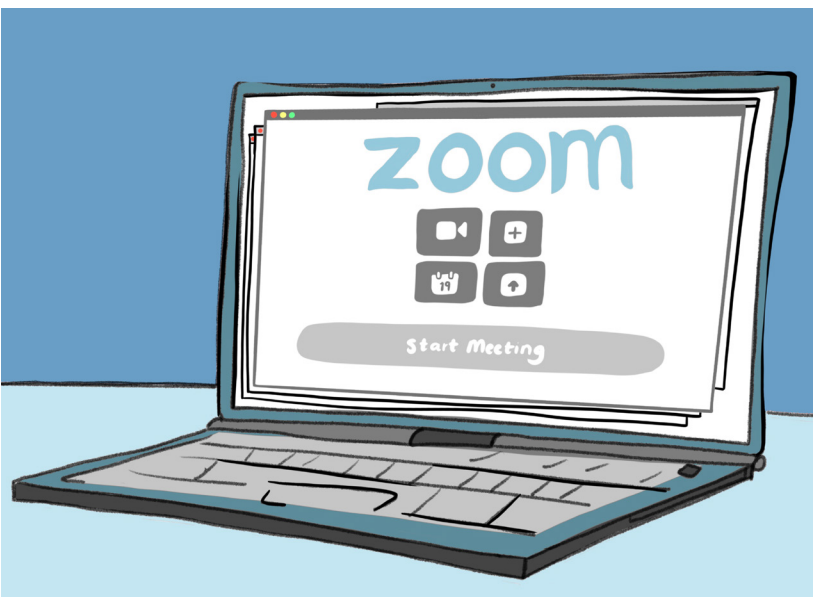
In-conference play in the NESCAC will resume in mid-April — roughly 13 months after competition was paused due to Covid-19 — the league's presidents announced on Tuesday afternoon.

"While we will not be able to conduct athletics seasons as usual at Middlebury, we do plan to organize practices and limited competitive games with regional opponents," an all-school email sent to students on Tuesday read. "NESCAC is currently developing schedules that are regional and limited in nature, and they will be released later in March."

*Continued online at middleburycampus.com*

BENJY RENTON/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Middlebury women's lacrosse celebrates after winning the NESCAC Championship in 2019.




PIA CONTRERAS/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

# Offensive Zoom bombs interrupt virtual Activities Fair booths

**By TONY SJODIN**
*News Editor*

Several Student Activities Fair meetings were interrupted last week by an anonymous participant who joined organizations' virtual booths and disrupted their meetings in ways ranging from impersonating a campus administrator to making transphobic comments.

The person joined organizations' Zoom rooms without their camera on, used a fake name — usually pretending to be an interested student — and asked questions about the organization from the representatives on the call. After a few minutes, however, they would say or do something to disturb the meeting.

None of the student organizations impacted could find an email address associated with the participant in the meeting report. However, administrators of an organization's Zoom plan may be able to check more detailed reports from meetings, including the IP address of devices that were used to access the meeting.

It is possible that the incidents could have involved multiple disruptors; however, the students interviewed for this article all described a similar voice and pattern of behavior across different organizations and days of the Activities Fair.

Lily Shannon '23 was running the Women's Rugby Club meeting when the person entered the organization's Zoom room. She and her co-host answered questions from the individual for several minutes, but the questions grew increasingly strange until the person made several transphobic comments and left, Shannon said.

The team's board members spoke about the incident later and decided not to share details of what happened to avoid giving the person the attention they were likely seeking.

"Suffice it to say, there were transphobic comments made, and they were not cool," Shannon said. "Our team wants to foster a sense of community and inclusivity, and we want all of our players to know that they are welcomed and valued on our team, so

*Continued online at middleburycampus.com*

LOCAL

# *Students donate over 3,000 lbs of quarantine snacks in food drive*

**By LUCY TOWNEND**
*Senior Local Editor*

When Middlebury students arrived this semester, their rooms were full of snacks to tide them over through room quarantine. But as the dining halls opened and students could pick up treats from MiddXpress or meals from The Grille, many of those snacks were left uneaten — about 3,000 pounds of them.

Emma Crockford '22.5 set out to make sure that food didn't go to waste, and started a food drive to bring those 3,000 pounds of food to the Addison County Teen Center, The Charter House shelter and Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects in Addison County (HOPE).

The food drive began in Starr Hall, the residential building where Crockford lives.

"I realized that no one in Starr was using their food bags, and a lot of it was ending up in the hallways or in kitchens," Crockford said.

Once the donations in Starr Hall started piling up, Crockford asked friends Ciara Burke '22, Trey Atkins '22.5 and Grace Kellogg '22 to help set up more stations around campus. Every few days, the organizers would collect food and store it in Crockford's room.

"I don't think Emma or I really expected it to take off," Atkins said. "We're all so happy that it did."

Crockford initially intended to donate the food solely to the Addison County Teen Center, where she has

*Continued online at middleburycampus.com*

# *Erik Arvidsson '21 leads U.S. team, finishes eighth in Ski World Cup*

COURTESY OF ERIK ARVIDSSON

Erik Arvidsson '21 finished eighth in the World Cup downhill race on March 6 in Saalbach, Austria.

# *Sophia Laukli '23: The alternate turned Nordic sensation*

COURTESY OF NORDIC FOCUS

Sophia Laukli '23 exceeded expectations and started three races during her time with Team USA in the Nordic World Ski Championships.


NEWS

*Student essential workers among first to receive Covid-19 vaccine*
**By CHARLIE KEOHANE**

*Febs, redefined: New students struggle with identity amid pandemic semester*
**By ROYA TOURAN**

*Created by and for students, JusTalks curates workshops that tackle hard questions*
**By KATIE FUTTERMAN**

*Ungrading: Professors experiment with unorthodox evaluation*
**By MAYA HEIKKINEN**

LOCAL

*Addison County Restorative Justice bolsters programming amid pandemic*
**By MAYNA KULA**

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*Reel Critic: 'Minari'*
**By NINA NG**

*WRMC Radio Roundup: New sounds for a new semester (part II)*
**By WRMC EXEC BOARD**

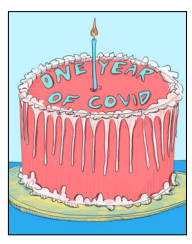
*A night in with Midd Movies, Middlebury's newest streaming platform*
**By EDYTH MALDOW**

*Film and media professors' recommendations for quarantine consumption*
**By SUMMER HORNBOSTEL**

OPINION

*Aid, apathy and Middlebury's unwillingness to pay*
**By ANDREW SEBALD**

*Notes from the Desk: A case study in extremes*
**By DALEELAH SALEH**




*Notes from the Desk: My week quarantined as a close contact*
**By ELIZA FREEDMAN**

SPORTS

*Siefer's Scoop Episode #12: Beau Root '23, men's baseball*
**By BLAISE SIEFER**

*Thomas Phifer '14, competitive rower, competes in U.S. Olympic Trials*
**By ABBY SCHNEIDERHAN**

*Ali Nullmeyer '23 skis for Team Canada in Europe*
**By SAM LIPIN**